

## CALIFORNIA.

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I came to this state three weeks ago to make an investigation of some lands for a proposed Brethren colony site. You have heard much of the attractions of this wonderful country. Of its salubrious climate, its great wealth, its fabulous mines of gold, its abnormal growth of trees and vegetation, of its beautiful flowers we have learned when we studied our Geographies in "the little red school house by the creek" in the east. So I will not speak of these though I would much like to enlarge especially on the beautiful fields of grain and grass, the acres of delicate poppies and the bushes, and arbors and banks of roses that one sees blooming in the wildest profusion at this season of the year. Nor do I wish to tell you of the colony we hope to establish here. Though it might be well to say that our investigations are progressing slowly. There are so many contingencies, among which can be named soil, climate, water, domestic and irrigation, location as to market and many others that might be named, that it is proving a great task indeed. An easterner who has not personally investigated these important points that enter into the very elements of success or failure can have little comprehension of the task that the good people here are undertaking to establish a colony in this state. In fact as the investigation is progressing we are all surprised, astounded at the task before us. So deeply have I been personally impressed with this fact that I frequently falter to push farther the investigation.

But I wish to speak of the work of the church in this state. In doing this you will pardon the personality if I record, in as simple a way as possible, what I have so far seen of the work.

I first drove with Elder J. P. Wolfe to East Union church. This is a country point 4 or 5 miles due east of Lathrop. There is here a lively and interesting Sunday-school in which I find the literature of the church. Brother Harrison preaches here every 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month at 3 P. M. Here I first met Brother and Sister Harrison in the state. They had held a morning service at Ripon, where our people have a well organized class of workers, and drove across the country to this afternoon meeting. Sister Reynolds, the superintendent of this school, was sick and as the work seems to rest mainly on her, much seemed to them to be missing. However the school seems to be one of the kind that is always wound up so as to run at least for one session of itself. Indeed if no apolo-

gy had been made, the absence of the superintendent would not have been noticed by a stranger.

Brother Harrison's sermon followed the school and was very brief, but brought out very forcibly the one point that there is great need of *individual work*. That every one has a *personal* obligation to God which no one else can meet for him. This is the key to the success of vital church organization. Absence of personal service to God is the reason that can be assigned everywhere for weak organizations.

In the evening Brother Harrison preached to the people at Lathrop. There was a fair sized and an attentive audience. The one point made here, and which was driven home to church members with a force that made many cringe, was that no one is doing his duty fully to God and his service, who does not make a public prayer. Brother Harrison has had much concern with his California people in that they looked too much to him to do the work. I am happy however to say that generally our brethren and sisters here are ardent Christians and that they will willingly do what they understand the Master asks of them. It is needless therefore to say that after all such a sermon, though it contains truths that are not so pleasant to all, will yet be received as the glad tidings of salvation. I have read much and heard some of the indifference of the Californian to God's service. However I feel in being with these dear people that they are peculiarly zealous in God's service, and I feel quite sure that Brother Harrison is leading them gently in the way the dear Lord would have them go.

The next Sunday Brother Harrison and I drove to Vernalis. This is "on the west side" as people say here. Meaning the west side of the San Joaquin. Here is where we find the richest and deepest soil but at the same time the least rain and hence most frequent failures of crops. The country is large and smooth and level and at this season of the year looks rich and beautiful. Here we find the largest wheat fields, but few fences, generally large houses and larger, much larger, barns. It is not anything unusual for one man to have out one section, 640 acres of wheat. In fact one of our brethren here has out 3400 acres of wheat. I believe he has his all at stake in this crop of wheat. I feel a great sympathy for such people and much regret that our people in this favored climate and soil are not located under some good system of irrigation and engaged in the pleasant and profitable industry of diversified farming.

Well we have some very zealous mem-

bers at Vernalis. This is the home of our good Brother Beer. The readers of the EVANGELIST will be happy to know that our dear brother, while he is growing old and feeble, yet is gaining in health.

Our people here have worshipped in a public hall but for some reason had to move their point to an adjoining country school-house. This is not satisfactory to the membership and the sisters make some very bold statements about building a house of worship. When the sisters once set their heads to have a thing they generally get it if its in the woods, and so I would not be surprised if the next California State Convention, which is to be held in one year at Vernalis, will be held in a new church.

I attended Sunday-school and two other services at this place and was very much pleased with the class of people whom I met. In fact I believe that by careful and aggressive work a strong and influential church can be established at this point.

The next Sunday was the 5th Sunday of the month. As Brother Harrison's services are all held on the 1st and 3rd and 2nd and 4th Sundays of the month he now and then gets a Sunday off. He spent this Sunday by giving our people a service at Altamont, about 40 miles west of Lathrop. Here we have a church building but no organized body of workers. However our hope is that arrangements can be made to revive the work at this point.

Brother Wolfe of whom no one, whether in the church or without, seems to be able to tell enough about his good qualities, conducts the services in Brother Harrison's absence at Lathrop. They hold Sunday-school every morning and preaching services every Lord's day evening. The congregation is not very large but they are composed of earnest workers and are higher intelligent listeners.

I next met with the sisters and the brethren at Turlock in the capacity of the State Convention on Thursday, April 2nd. Here we have a body of organized Christian workers but no regular preaching. However they are earnest and zealous. They have a Sunday-school and prayer-meeting that meets each Lord's day morning and afternoon. They had made the very best of provisions to receive the delegates and visiting members of the convention.

I will not endeavor to report this Convention. The faces present which I had met in the east were Brethren Holsinger, Beer and Harrison. And yet we are becoming acquainted and other faces are becoming familiar. The churches of the